

About King Philip's Hill

This 10.5 acre parcel was acquired by the town of Northfield in 1974. The deed specifies that it be controlled by the Conservation Commission, “for the promotion and development of the natural resources and for the protection of the watershed resources... to be held solely for conservation and historic preservation purposes.”

The Hike

From the kiosk walk along the road toward the river; a marker shows where the trail turns left, and immediately you choose the loop walk or the riverbank walk. Going counterclockwise, the loop walk stays level for a short distance, then works its way up to the top of a gully; from there traverse around the edge of the gullies back to the beginning. The very end of the loop follows a steep esker (a narrow, sandy bluff left as a remnant from glacial outwash) down to the road. The riverbank walk immediately progresses gently upward to the top of the riverbank and proceeds to the left (north) for a short distance.

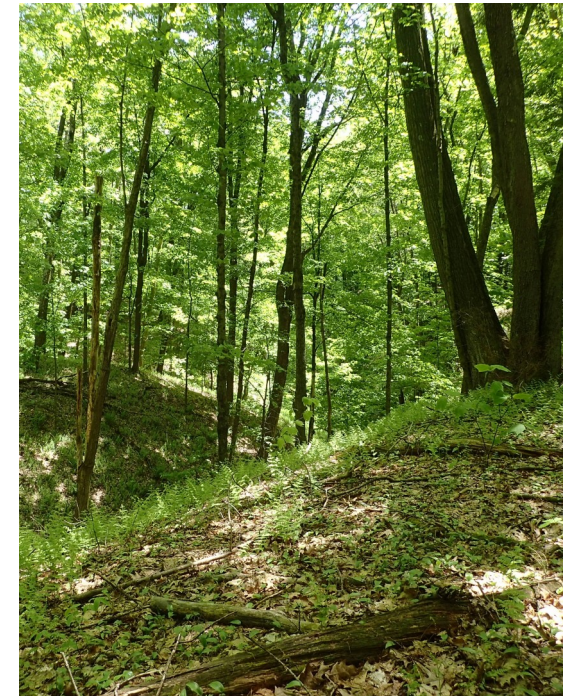
Directions to Trailhead

Take Route 10 south across the Connecticut River, then the first right onto Old Bernardston Access Rd, and right again onto Old Bernardston Rd. The parking area is immediately on the left. The trailhead is about 110 yards further.

Other Northfield Trails

<u>Alderbrook Meadow</u> : A short, handi-capped accessible loop trail to a beaver pond located on Rte 63, 1.5 miles south of the village center.	loop length: .5 miles elevation gain: 50 feet
<u>Alexander Hill Trails</u> - A network of trails for hiking and skiing is located in the Northfield State Forest at the top of Alexander Hill Rd.	loop length: 3.2 miles elevation gain: 280 feet mostly blue blazes
<u>Bald Hills Loop Trail</u> - A loop off of the New England trail, trailhead shares with the Brush Mountain/ Town Forest trails on Gulf Rd. Start N on while NET blazes, take blue blazed trail to the left, then turn right to rejoin the white blazed NET to return.	Loop length: 1.6 miles elevation gain: 360 feet blue. white blazes
<u>Brush Mountain</u> - A town-owned 46-acre historical and recreation area with a trail to the top of the mountain; the trail is fairly level at the beginning, but becomes steep.	out & back: 0.8 miles elevation gain: 220 feet white blazes
<u>Coller Cemetery Trails</u> – A network of trails for hiking and skiing located in the Northfield State forest off the end of Coller Cemetery Rd. One trail is described here– check the trailhead kiosk for more about the other trails	out & back: 3.1 miles elevation gain: 220 feet mostly blue blazes
<u>Hobo Falls Trail</u> : A picturesque falls. From the trailhead on Old Wendell Rd., follow the road south for 0.4 miles, then turn left off the road at the Hobo Falls sign	out & back: 1.1 miles elevation gain: 240 feet Northfield trail signs
<u>Town Forest Trail</u> - A town-owned 150-acre conservation and recreation area with a loop trail. Trailhead at the Brush Mountain kiosk and parking area.	Loop length: 2.2 miles elevation gain: 250 feet mostly yellow blazes
<u>Mill Brook Wetlands</u> - An extensive wetland and wildlife area, with a circumference trail on private property near the center of the village. Park at the golf course; trailhead south of the parking lot.	loop length: 1.5 miles elevation gain: 180 feet white blazes
<u>New England Trail</u> - A national scenic trail, with an interesting section in Northfield.	Multiple sections white blazes
<u>Satan's Kingdom</u> - A large wildlife management area with an old forestry road. The trail goes to the top of the ridge, where there is a view of Northfield village across the valley.	out & back: 3.0 miles elevation gain: 580 feet

King Philip's Hill Trail



Length: 0.5 mile loop, short spur
Elevation gain: 80 feet



History

Before European settlement in 1673, this land and the area to the south were part of Native American settlements for millennia. Temple & Sheldon report evidence of large clay lined granaries, ‘workshops’ with stone chips “by the bushel,” signs of lodges, and burying places near Bennett’s Meadow; a fort on King Philip’s Hill was likely “part of a regular system of defenses.”

During King Philip’s War, King Philip (born Metacom, son and successor of Massasoit, sachem of the Wampanoag) was in this area. For a few weeks from mid- February through March 8, 1676, he encamped upon the fortified bluff that now bears his name. King Philip’s presence in this area was also recorded in the famous captivity account of Mary Rowlandson. Following his time on this plateau, King Philip traveled a few miles up river to Cowas (now Mill Brook) to meet with the Narragansetts.



There are a series of trenches in evidence on the plateau which may have been dug during this time for defense.

Use of Public Land

Everyone is welcome to walk this land and appreciate its rich historical significance, but please follow “Leave No Trace” principles. Metal detectors are not allowed. All stone structures in the town of Northfield are protected as cultural resources and should not be disturbed.

More about this trail and others is available online at www.northfieldmass.org/trails. Website and brochure are courtesy of the Northfield Open Space Committee, with guidance from the Northfield Historical Commission.

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Additional historical information in:

“A History of the Town of Northfield, Massachusetts, for 150 years, with an Account of the Prior Occupation of the Territory by the Squakheags: and with family Genealogies” by J. H. Temple and George Sheldon. 1875.